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Prelim A

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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant(s): KATO, et al.  
Filed: November 29, 2000  
For: VACUUM PROCESSING APPARATUS AND OPERATING METHOD THEREFOR

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Assistant Commissioner for Patents  
Washington, D.C. 20231  
November 29, 2000

Sir:

Please amend the above-identified application, prior to examination thereof, as follows:

IN THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend the specification as follows:

Page 1, delete lines 1-8 in their entirety, and substitute therefor the following:

--This application is a Continuation application of application Serial No. 09/552,572, filed April 19, 2000, which is a Divisional application of application Serial No. 09/461,432, filed December 16, 1999, <sup>now abandoned</sup> which is a Continuation application of application Serial No. 09/177,495, filed October 23, 1998, <sup>now us patent 6,012,235</sup> which is a Continuation application of application Serial No. 09/061,062, filed April 16, 1998, <sup>now us patent 5,950,330</sup> which is a Continuation application of application Serial No. 08/882,731, filed June 26, 1997, <sup>now us patent 5,784,799</sup> which is a Divisional application of application Serial No. 08/593,870, filed

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